

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0342

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 01147

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, FI

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE OF FINNISH DELEGATION AT UN

1. SUMMARY: THE FINNISH UN DELEGATION, WHILE RELATIVELY SMALL, IS WELL-ORGANIZED AND GENERALLY WELL-PREPARED TO HANDLE EFFECTIVELY ISSUES IN WHICH IT HAS A PARTICULAR INTEREST. PERMREP ILKKA OLAVI PASTINEN HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY ACTIVE ON DISARMAMENT QUESTIONS, AND FINNISH DELEGATIONS HAVE USUALLY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE ON ISSUES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD. FINLAND COORDINATES CLOSELY WITH THE OTHER NORDIC STATES BUT OCCASIONALLY FINDS ITSELF OUT OF STEP (WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP) ON ISSUES OF PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY TO THE SOVIETS. WE HAVE FOUND PASTINEN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FINNISH PERMANENT MISSION AND GA DELEGATIONS GENERALLY RECEPTIVE TO OUR APPROACHES AND PERSONALLY FRIENDLY. THE FINNISH DELEGATION IS HELD IN HIGH RESPECT AT THE UN. FOLLOWING ARE MORE DETAILED COMMENTS ON THEIR ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO A FEW INDIVIDUAL ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. FINNISH UN PERMREP PASTINEN HAS DEEP INTEREST IN AND CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE WITH DISARMAMENT ISSUES. UNDER
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HIS LEADERSHIP, THE FINNISH DELEGATION PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE AT THE 32ND UNGA, INTRODUCING THE MAJOR NON-PROLIFERATION RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY (32/87 F.). AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH OFFICIALS IN ACDA AND STATE, PASTINEN WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE US DELEGATED BY AMBASSADORS FISHER AND LEONARD IN DEVELOPING SUPPORT AND CONDUCTING DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE YUGOSLAVS,

PAKISTANIS AND OTHER INTERESTED NON-ALIGNED DELEGATIONS ON THIS CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT. WHILE PASTINEN IS REGARDED BY SOME UN DELS AS ABRASIVE, AND THIS WAS ALSO A FACTOR IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CONSULTATIONS, WE NONETHELESS BELIEVE HE PLAYED A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AND USEFUL ROLE IN PROMOTING ASSEMBLY ENDORSEMENT OF A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT US OBJECTIVES, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR THE NPT, THE IAEA AND THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION(INFCE). PASTINEN IS AIMING AT THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE THIS FALL, AND WE HOPE HE GETS IT.

3. FINLAND HAS FOLLOWED CLOSELY THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE MAY-JUNE SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT BUT, SINCE IT IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE, HAS NOT BEEN DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE DRAFTING OR NEGOTIATING EXERCISES. FINLAND CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO GIVE STRONG SUPPORT TO OUR NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES, AND TO ENCOURAGE FURTHER US-SOVIET ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS, INCLUDING EARLY CONCLUSION OF SALT II AND CTB.

4. ON DECOLONIZATION ISSUES, THE ITEM ON WHICH WE HAVE MOST CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT FINNISH SUPPORT HAS BEEN GUAM. AT THE 30TH GA FINLAND VOTED FOR THE RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE US MILITARY PRESENCE BUT ABSTAINED AT THE 31ST GA. AT THE 32ND GA WE WERE ANTICIPATING FINNISH SUPPORT FOR US-FAVORED AUSTRALIAN AMENDMENTS TO A VIETNAMESE
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RESOLUTION, BUT THE ISSUE NEVER CAME TO A VOTE. WE HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH OUR FINNISH COLLEAGUES IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE AND ALWAYS RECEIVED A COURTEOUS AND SYMPATHETIC HEARING.

5. THE DELEGATION FROM FINLAND PLAYED A DECISIVE ROLE ON TWO OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT CAME BEFORE THE THIRD COMMITTEE. IN BOTH CASES THEIR GREAT EFFECTIVENESS DERIVED FROM (1) PASTINEN'S ENERGETIC LEG-WORK AMONG THIRD COMMITTEE DELEGATES, (2) THE MIDDLE GROUND THAT FINLAND OCCUPIES IN MEDIATING ON SOME ISSUES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST AND BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH, AND (3) FINNISH LEADERSHIP IN ENSURING NORDIC UNITY ON THE TWO ISSUES.

6. THE FIRST ISSUE WAS A RESOLUTION (GA RES32/130) WHICH ORIGINALLY WAS PARTLY DESIGNED TO STOP THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PROPOSAL, THOUGH IT WAS ALSO A VEHICLE FOR ATTEMPTING TO DEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS ON THE ONE HAND, AND ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS ON THE OTHER. THE FINNS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PERSUADING THE NON-ALIGNED TO NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE

WESTERN STATES, WHO WANTED TO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION IF SOME OF THE MORE EXTREME RHETORICAL LANGUAGE COULD BE DELETED. THIS RESOLUTION WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN BRINGING THE NON-ALIGNED AND THE WESTERN POWERS INTO A CLOSER DIALOGUE ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE FINNISH ROLE IN THIS PROCESS WAS DECISIVE.

7. THE SAME WAS TRUE ON THE UGANDA ISSUE, BUT HERE THE FINNS NOT ONLY PLAYED A DECISIVE ROLE, BUT WORKED ALMOST SINGLEHANDEDLY. THOUGH IT HAS BECOME FASHIONABLE FOR SOME TO CRITICIZE THE LACK OF CONCRETE ACTION RESULTING FROM THIS EXERCISE IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE, SUBSEQUENT EVENTS (AT THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION) CONFIRM THE WISDOM OF THE FINNISH POSITION OF INSISTING THAT THE ONLY ROLE FOR THE

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WEST IN THIS CASE WAS TO OFFER NOT TO DEBATE THE ISSUE PUBLICLY IF THE AFRICAN NATIONS WOULD DO SOMETHING ON THE ISSUE PRIVATELY. FINNISH SUCCESS ON THIS TOPIC REPRESENTS

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TED A FOUR-FRONT DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE: TO MAINTAIN THE WILL OF THE NORDICS (WHICH WAS DIFFICULT), TO KEEP THE COMMUNIST BLOC FROM FISHING IN TROUBLED WATERS, TO MODERATE BOTH THE IMPATIENCE AND PESSIMISM OF THE WESTERN POWERS, AND TO KEEP THE DIALOGUE OPEN WITH THE AFRICANS. THEY

SUCCEEDED IN ALL OF THESE. THE SKILLFUL HANDLING OF THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LAID THE ESSENTIAL GROUNDWORK FOR ITS SUBSEQUENT CONSIDERATION AT THE FEBRUARY-MARCH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND THE PERCEDENT-SETTING DECISION BY THAT BODY TO TAKE SPECIFIC ACTION. LEONARD

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